, but a collection of nations, united for certain purposes and for the general convenience and profit, under an arrangement or treaty known as the Constitution of the United States. It was not denied—at least, it was not seriously denied—that the original thirteen States, when they adopted the Constitution, intended it to be of perpetual validity; nor was it denied that the States which had subsequently been admitted into the Union came in with the expectation of remaining in it forever. But it was maintained that, if the original thirteen States were, when the Revolutionary War came to an end, thirteen independent nations, like England or France, the Constitution was, and, in fact, could not have been anything but a treaty between them, since there was no amalgamation of the States effected by it, and since the government instituted by it was not established on an independent and self-sustaining basis, but on the contrary required the constant voluntary action of the different States to keep it in operation. If, then, the Constitution wan a treaty between sovereign nations, it was plain that any one of the parties to ifc might, in the exercise of its sovereign power, at any time withdraw from that treaty. In thus acting, it might lay itself open, very

possibly, to severe animadversion; it might incur blame, and deserve blame. The hostile feeling against it might even bring about a war. But still, having acted clearly within its rights as an independent nation, the nation thus withdrawing from the treaty was, whether right or wrong in its conduct, clearly entitled, according to the law of nations, to